THE EXCELLENCY OF THE Protestant Faith, AS TO IT'S Objects and Supports. IN A SERMON

Preached *November* 5th, 1689.

By *T. CRUSO.*

PSALM 18. 31.

For who is God save the Lord? Or who is a Rock save our God?

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THE

EXCELLENCY

OF A

GOOD CONSCIENCE.

SERMON

PREACHED

BY

M. JEREMY TAYLOR.

THE

PREFACE.

THough the *Judaical* Obſervation of Times (*ſuch as their Anniverſary Feaſts of the* Paſſeover, Pentecoſt, *and* Tabernacles *were*) *be forbidden to the Goſpel-Church, and no Day* (*excepting the* firſt *of the Week*) *hath now any ſtated Holineſs in it more than another, yet an* occaſional Commemoration *of Judgments and Mercies upon thoſe Dayes, which God himſelf hath ſignalized; may be an uſeful means to faſten a* durable Impreſſion *of both upon us, as well as to tranſmit the moſt* Effectual Notice *of God's wonderful Works to following Ages. As it is not fit that we ſhould ceaſe* to humble our ſelves under the Hand of God, *ſo ſoon as any Calamity is removed, ſo on the other ſide, we ſhould not leave off to* rejoyce in his Goodneſs, *immediately after* Galat. 4. 10.

ter it hath paſs't before us. That which is done in one
Pſal. 102. 18. Generation, muſt be written for the Generation to come, and the People which ſhall be created, ſhall praiſe the Lord.

It is too evident, by the Infidelity which hath reign'd among us, that we in this Nation had forgotten the God of our Fathers, and worn out the ſenſe of former Deliverances; God's reſcuing of them heretofore out of a danger which they ſaw not, was little thought of for our own Encouragement, in the midſt of Dangers which we did ſee; the Mercy was almoſt buried in the Graves of thoſe who primarily receiv'd it; and though we ſtill ſhar'd in its happy Conſequences, yet it ſcarcely infus'd any more Life into our Faith, than if the remembrance of it had been quite extinct. We look'd forward ſo much upon the Miſeries which we had in proſpect,
Pſal. 77. 5. that there were few, who look't back upon the days of old, or that conſider'd the years of Ancient times.

Notwithſtanding this, and other ſad Tokens which were upon us, of our great Unmindfulneſs of God, (who had been a Known and a Tryed Refuge) he was pleaſed very ſeaſonably now again to make bare his Arm in our own time, and to put a new Song into our Mouths, which contains in it more matter of thankful Admiration, than the former did; ſo that we ſeem to have the Portion of

Jacob

Jacob, *for* our Bleſſings have prevailed above the Bleſſings of our Progenitors, *and though our ſhamefnl degeneracy forbids us to think, that we are* better than our Fathers (*when indeed we are ſo notoriouſly* worſe) *yet we muſt ſay, that God hath appear'd more eminently for us, than he did for them. That which we have* ſeen, *exceeds what we have* heard, *and even in this caſe, the* Younger *Deliverance will claim a preheminence above the* Elder. *I ſpeak not this, as if one muſt therefore* ſupplant, *or blot out the memory of the other, for they both agree, and conſiſt very well together; and the* ſame *day having* two *ſuch remarkable* Seals *fixt upon it by Providence, it will ſurely be very Famous to all our Poſterities, as long as the* Proteſtant Name *endures in* England, *which I hope will be, as long as the World it ſelf remains. I doubt not, but that they who ſincerely value* either *of theſe, will triumph in them* both; *and therefore if there be any who ſecretly repine at this* laſt, *'tis no uncharitable imagination to ſuppoſe, that they are really diſpleas'd with the* firſt *alſo; for the* diſtance *of* Fourſcore and Three Years *between them is not ſo conſiderable as the* Affinity *of their* Nature. Gen. 49.26.

I muſt add to obviate the Exceptions of Strangers *or* Enemies, *that this Diſcourſe had never been made more publick, than it was firſt made by Preaching, if the Authors intentions could have ſtood*

againſt the deſires of the Hearers; and therefore the expoſing of it thus to common view, which was never framed with any ſuch deſign, muſt be laid at their door, and not at mine. If it might but fall into the hands of as favourable Readers, and be attended with a Bleſſing from Heaven in the peruſal, I ſhould however chearfully expect, that its numerous Imperfections would in Charity be overlookt, and the main Truths entertain'd with ſome good ſucceſs; they that

2 Cor. 4. 7. *neglect the* Treaſure *which is in* Earthen Veſſels, *and only look with a cenſorious Eye to the* droſſy part, *are really moſt injurious to themſelves, and will loſe the benefit of far better and more valuable Performances, than this, or any of mine can be.*

I conclude with a ſpecial Requeſt to thoſe, who ſo earneſtly intreated this from me, that they would follow it with their Prayers to God, that it may go forth in his Name, *and cloathed with a Divine Power, ſo as not to* return void or empty to him that ſends it; *and that my whole Service in the Miniſtry committed to me may be proſperous to thoſe that place themſelves under it, which will be the* Glory and Joy *of*

The leaſt of God's Saints, and
Novemb. 9. *Unworthieſt of his Meſſengers,*
1689
T. C.

THE EXCELLENCY OF THE *PROTESTANT FAITH*, AS TO IT'S Objects and Supports.

DEUTERON. XXXII. 31.

For their Rock is not as our Rock, even our Enemies themſelves being Judges.

THIS Dying Song of *Moſes* (whereof the Words now mentioned are a part) is not only *Hiſtorical*, but *Prophetical*, containing ſome hints both of God's *paſt* and *future* Diſpenſations towards the *Iſraelites*. His main ſcope and deſign in all, is to ſhew, that God was not to be blamed for his dealing with *them*, but they were to be condemned for revolting from *him*: And therefore whatſoever

whatſoever Bleſſings they *loſt*, or Severities they *felt*, they muſt look upon their *own Sin* as the Cauſe and Reaſon of it. To this purpoſe, *Moſes* ſtarts the
Ver. 30. Queſtion in the words going before the Text, *How ſhould One chaſe a Thouſand, and Two put Ten Thouſand to flight, except their Rock had ſold them, and the Lord had ſhut them up?* This ſeems to be a ſtrange and ſurpriſing Contradiction to what God had promiſed
Levit. 26. 8. by the ſame *Moſes* before; *Five of you ſhall chaſe an Hundred, and an Hundred of you ſhall put Ten Thouſand to flight*; (which was repeated, as to the ſub-
Joſh. 23. 10. ſtance of it, by his Succeſſor *Joſhua*, when he called the People together, towards the cloſe of his Government.) They might therefore now wonder to hear, that One of *their Adverſaries* ſhould chaſe a Thouſand of Them; though indeed the threatning grew more familiar to them afterwards; for the Prophet tells them, *One Thouſand ſhall flee at the rebuke of*
Iſa. 30. 17. *One; at the rebuke of Five ſhall you flee, till you are left as a Beacon upon the top of a Mountain*, &c. But this Riddle is eaſily reſolved; the Promiſe before ſpoken of, was upon the ſuppoſition of their Obedience; and conſequently when they *ſold themſelves by their Iniquities* (which is laid to their charge,)
chap. 50. 1. it might well be expected that *their Rock ſhould ſell them* in a way of Judgment, and when they *withheld*
Rom. 1. 18. (or impriſon'd, like the *Heathen*) *the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*, they might rationally think, that the *Lord would ſhut them up* in a ſtate of Miſery and Thraldom.

Now leſt they or their Adverſaries ſhould overlook the *Divine Hand* in ſo marvellous a change, and more eſpecially leſt their *Adverſaries* ſhould (who were apt to ſay, as we read in this very Chapter,
Ver. 27. *Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this*)

Moſes

Moſes adds in theſe words, *For their Rock is not*, &c. *q. d.* Tho Multitudes of the Heathens ſhould be defeated by a few of the *Iſraelites*, it would be no ſtrange thing, becauſe their Idol-Gods can do nothing at all for their *protection*, and on the other ſide, if many of the *Iſraelites* be vanquiſht by a ſmall number of the Heathen, which carryes a more aſtoniſhing appearance, it cannot be, becauſe thoſe Idols act for their *aſſiſtance*, but becauſe our God does *withdraw* that help from us, which he is able to *afford* to us.

We have here in the Text it ſelf *two* particulars conſiderable. 1. The *Preference* of the true God unto all others. [*Their Rock is not as our Rock.*] The *Rock* is a Title given to God not only in this, and the preceding Verſe, but thrice before in this Chapter; and very often in the Book of *Pſalms*. Rocks anciently being places of ſhelter which Men uſed to fly unto in times of danger and diſtreſs; and therefore Holy *David* calls God the *Rock of his Refuge*. 2. The *Acknowledgment* of this by *Iſraels* Adverſaries. [*Even our Enemies themſelves being Judges.*] They that were ſo ready to *reproach* and *blaſpheme the Name of God*, as well as to *boaſt* and *magnifie themſelves*, yet could not deny this. It was owned not only by their *Friends* and Favourers, ſuch as *Jethro* was, and *Rahab*, but alſo by their worſt and greateſt *Oppoſers*, ſuch as the *Egyptians*, and *Philiſtins* too. So that *Moſes* his *Appeal* to the Heathens here, is much like that which God made to the *Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and the Men of Judah* in their own caſe, or like that which the *Apoſtles* made to the *Jewiſh Rulers, whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.*

Ver. 4. 15, 18.
1 Sam. 13. 6.
Pſal. 94. 22.
Exod. 18. 11.
Joſh. 2. 11.
Exod. 14. 18.
1 Sam. 4. 8.
Iſa. 5. 3.
Acts 4. 19.

Two things are evidently *presupposed.* 1. That *There are no Persons in the World, but what have some ROCK or other to be the object of their Confidence.* When *Israel* cast off the God *of Abraham*, *the Fear of Isaac*, and *the Portion of Jacob*, they chose *new Gods*; they did not turn perfect *Atheists*, but they had *their* Gods still (though poor counterfeit ones) as
v. 37. *the Rock in whom they trusted.* So the other *Barbarous Nations* had their several *Deities* whom they depended on for all necessary succours, as well as paid a respect and veneration to. This is included in what
Micah 4. 5. the *Prophet* says, *All People will walk, every one in the Name of his God.* Every Man is naturally sensible, that he is not a *self-sufficient* being, and therefore seeks after something *without* himself, to believe in. Men chuse rather to exercise Faith upon that which
v. 21. indeed *is not* God (as *Moses* speaks in this same *Song*) because it hath the *Name*, than to live absolutely without *any* God at all. 2. *The Church and the World do not repose their trust in the same God.* Their Rock, and our Rock are different. The People of God, and the rest of Mankind, agree no better in their *confidences*, than they do in their *delights*, and many other things; as they do not *love* the same Objects, so they do not *lean upon* the same. *Some trust* (says
Psal. 20. 7. the *Psalmist*) *in Chariots, and some in Horses, but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God.* Many that pretend to believe and rest upon our Rock, will be sure first to *hew* him after their own fancies; they *shape* and *fashion* a God according as may please themselves; but then it must be consider'd, that if Men do not take him as the *Scripture* represents him, he is not the *same*, but *another* God. Many pretend a Relyance upon him, but they make *other things* their supports in *conjunction with him*, which is really the

having

having of more Gods than one; whereas we should say with *David*, *He only is my Rock, and my Salvation.* Psal. 52. 2, 6.

The *principal* thing to be *Observed* from the Words, is, That *the true Church of God is intitled to the best Rock, in the Judgment of her very Enemies.* Doct.

In the prosecuting of this, I shall endeavour to shew,

I. In what respects God may be styled the Churches Rock.

II. How it appears, that this Rock is better than that of her Enemies.

III. Whence it comes to pass, that 'tis better even in their Judgment, who yet reject and oppose it.

IV. Conclude with some Inferences, by way of Application, *especially to this day.*

First of all, I am to shew upon what accounts God may be styled the Churches Rock. This shoul'd be open'd distinctly under these *two* Heads, why is he called a *Rock* in general, and why *our* Rock in particular. I.

First, I shall enquire, why God hath this *general Name* and Character of a *Rock* given to him here. Not to run into the imprudent *extream* of alledging those resemblances which are *forc't*, or *foreign* to this matter, I shall only insist upon *three*, which the Spirit of God himself does expresly propound to us. The Infinite God may be very fitly set forth by a Rock, upon the account of *Height*, *Fixedness*, and *Strength.* 1.

First, God is justly term'd a *Rock* in respect of *Height.* Rocks are usually of an *Elevated Situation* above the other adjacent parts. As this is commonly known, and need not be laboriously prov'd, so the 1.

Holy Ghost does particularly refer to it in this case.
Isa. 33. 16. The promise to him, that *walketh Righteously, and speaketh uprightly* (as distinguisht from the *Sinners in* Zion) is, that *he shall dwell on high, his place of defence*
Psal. 61. 2. *shall be the Munition of Rocks.* Accordingly, *David* in the midst of his Troubles, when his *Heart was overwhelmed*, cryes out to God, *Lead me to the Rock which is higher than I.* And elsewhere speaking of
78. 35. the *Jews* in the time of their Affliction, he says, that *they remembred that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer.* God is often describ'd, as the *Lofty one*, and one that's *higher than the highest.* And
Gen. 14. 18, 19, 20, 22. the *Most High God* is the Name whereby he is called no less than four times within the compass of five Verses. This may not only be understood of the *Incomprehensibleness* of God's Nature, (who is *far above our sight*, and out of the *reach* of our thoughts) but also, and as I conceive, principally of his *Sovereignty* and *Dominion*; for all Creatures as they are vastly *inferiour*, so they are perfectly *subject* to him. This is a great security to the Church, that their God hath every thing *at his foot*, and under his absolute Command; his proceedings are unaccountable, and his purposes uncontroulable; for he is the *Supreme*, and
Isa. 13. 3. therefore (as the Prophet speaks) we may *rejoyce in his Highness.*

2. Secondly, God may be styled a *Rock*, in respect of *Fixedness.* Rocks are counted some of the most stable parts of this lower Creation; and therefore when the Holy Ghost would represent a *more than ordinary storm* of Divine displeasure, he says, that *the*
Nah. 1. 6. *Rocks are thrown down by him*; which implyes, that they are not lyable to *common shakings.* Our Saviour
Matth. 7. 24, 25. tells us of the *Wise Man who built his House upon a Rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and*

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the Winds blew and beat upon that Houſe, but it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock. This ſhadows out to us the *firm unſhaken* Counſels of the *Immutable* God, who from Everlaſting, and to Everlaſting, is free from the leaſt Alteration either in his *Being*, or *Will*. He does not *turn*, and *waver* to and fro, as the beſt and nobleſt of his Creatures (witneſs the fall of *Angels* and *Men*) are prone of themſelves to do, but is alwayes in *one State*, and of *one mind*. This is a mighty advantage to us alſo; as himſelf ſays, *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not conſumed.* Mal. 3. 6. An unchangeable God is the Author of the Churches *ſtability*, or elſe ſhe had been long ago *toſs't* by the *hand of Violence*, and *kickt* by the *foot of Pride* out of the World; but *God is in the midſt of her*, and (for that reaſon) *ſhe ſhall not be moved.* Pſa. 46. 5. His *Eye and Heart* which at the firſt were chiefly plac'd upon his People, can never be *taken off* from them; there is no more variableneſs in his *Affection*, than uncertainty in his *duration*; he may as ſoon be *pluckt out of his Throne*, as the *graving of Zion be raced out of the Palms of his Hands.*

3. Thirdly, God may be truly ſet forth under the notion of a *Rock*, upon the account of *ſtrength*. When *Balaam* look't upon the *Kenites*, (a People very well fortifyed) he took up this *Parable*, *Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou putteſt thy reſt in a Rock.* Num. 24. 21. We know, that one of the *Miracles* at our Saviours Paſſion, was *the rending of the Rocks.* What Inſtruments have force enough to enter into them? They that *ſplit* and break ſo many other things, ſtill remain *whole* and entire themſelves. This plainly holds forth to us the *Eternal Power of God*, who is called the *Rock of our ſtrength.* Mat. 27. 51. Iſa. 17. 10. Omnipotence is *eſſential* to him, and therefore *David* mentions his being *exalted in his* Pſal. 21. 13.

own

own strength, to difference him from us, and such as we are, because all created strength is *borrowed*, and separable from the Creature. How securely therefore can God bid defiance to the poor *feeble* attempts of Devils and Men, who receive that strength *from* him, which they exert *against* him! How apparently unavoidable is it, that whosoever *dashes* against this *Rock*, must be *broken!* As this should put God's Enemies in *fear*, (who contend with one that is infinitely *mightier* than themselves) so 'tis a very encouraging Motive of his Peoples *Trust*; the *Weakness of God* may much better be relyed on, than *Humane Power*, when it is at its *utmost pitch*. What is an *Arm of Flesh* to the *Arm of the Lord?* How *Invincible* is he, and they that confide in him? Nothing can make any *opposition*, if he think fit to *prevent* it, nothing can have any *success*, if he resolve to *blast* it. He is able to *do* all that he *desires*, and to *undo* all that is *endeavour'd* by any of his Adversaries.

2 *Secondly*, I am to examine, why God is called *our* Rock; how comes the *Church* to have this *peculiar propriety* in him, as divided from the *World*. There is a twofold *Right*, or foundation for this claim; *God's Covenant*, and *our Choice*; because he hath freely *given* himself to us, and we (if we are *born from above*) have unfeignedly *received* him.

1 First, God is *our* Rock by *Covenant:* As he hath engaged, and *betrothed* himself to us, and us to himself *for ever, in Righteousness, and in Judgment, in Loving kindness, and in Mercies*. None can doubt, (unless they assume more boldness to *clip* the *Divine Prerogative*, than that of *Man*) but that God *may* communicate a *distinct and separate Interest* in himself to whomsoever he pleaseth; and every one who knows the Scripture, must know that God *does not*

Hos. 2. 19.

please

pleaſe to communicate any ſuch Intereſt, but to his Church *only*, as a Society call'd out of the World. The reſt of Mankind, as they have a rooted Principle of *Atheiſm* in their *Hearts*, and ſay that *there is no God*, ſo they have indeed *as little relation* to him, *as if there were none*. There is no *General Covenant* made ſince the fall with *all* the Children of *Adam*, but a *ſpecial Covenant of Grace* with all the *faithful*, which conveys a *new* Title to them, inſtead of the *Old* one, loſt by the firſt Apoſtacy. He that was *a God to Abraham*, and to his *Natural Seed*, excluding all other *Nations*, under the Old Teſtament, is a God to his *Spiritual believing Seed*, excluding all other *Perſons* whatſoever, now under the New Teſtament. God is not the *ſame* to common Men, as he is to his particular People; though he be cloath'd with the ſame *Attributes*, yet he does not *exerciſe* them alike. As for the *Men of the Earth*, he is not bound by *promiſe to be their* Rock, but on the contrary he is oblig'd by his *threatnings* to be *their Revenger*; his *Truth* does not tye him to *defend*, but to *deſtroy* them. Gen. 17. 7.

Secondly, God is *Our* Rock by *Choice*, and voluntary acceptance. All that are *Iſraelites indeed* have ſincerely taken the Lord to be *their* God, and thankfully rejoyce in him *as ſuch*. *Behold we come unto thee*, (ſays the Church) *for thou art the Lord our God*. Again, in another place, we find them making the like profeſſion: *We will not ſay any more to the work of our hands, ye are our Gods*. This *Negative* here implyes an *Affirmative*; their *renouncing* and abandoning of *falſe* Gods did include their *embracing* of the *true*. Such Texts are ſo numerous, that 'tis needleſs to cite them. The taking of God to be our Ruler and our Portion, *our Soveraign* and *our Shield* is the very *firſt* thing, which truly *adds us to the Church*, and Jerem. 3. 22. Hoſ. 14. 3. 2.

and manifests our saving Conversion. Till we place our happiness and our security in him, and are willing to live both under God's *Government* and *Protection*, we are properly *of the World*, and *walk according to its course*. Isa. 33. 22. *The Lord is our King, he will save us*, is (as it were) the Natural and Primitive Language of all *Returning Sinners*, when they are effectually *called to be Saints*. God's *offering* of himself to us in the Unlimited Ministry of the Word, does not make him *Ours* (for he is offered to multitudes now, whom he will not *know* at last) but our hearty *Complyance* with it; 'tis a *mutual agreement* on both hands, which must confirm the *Interest*, and complete the *Title*. God is not to be lookt upon as *our* Rock, before the Spirit perswades and prevails with us to *chuse* him; and if we are not perswaded so to do, we are *not really his people*, though we may be *called by his Name*.

II. The *Second* thing, is to shew, how it does appear, that our Rock, or the Rock which the Church is entitled to, is *better than that of our Enemies*. If we *compare* them a little together, we shall quickly and easily see a vast *Disproportion*. I only premise, that as a long *continued Ridge* of Hills is sometimes reckoned by Geographers and others, as *One* Mountain, so *their* Rock (who are and have been the Churches greatest Enemies) though it go under that *single denomination*, is indeed a *Conjunction of many things*, which they make their Refuge, and esteem their safety. I shall instance in six particulars, which may be comprehended under this General term.

1. First, An *Humane Head* is *their* Rock. The degenerate *Roman Church* does expresly and openly avow this; they declare themselves to be *Originally* headed by *Peter*, as the *chief of the Apostles*, and *their Bishop*, and

and *Founder*, and *now* by the *Pope*, as his *Succeſſor*. Let us look a little into both.

First, As to *Peter*, though we ſhould grant him to be *Biſhop of Rome* (which is more than we need to do, becauſe no ſatisfying proof can be brought that ever *he was there*,) yet that he had the *primacy* among the reſt of his *Brethren*, the Apoſtles, and that the *Chriſtian Church* was *founded* upon him, is by no means to be allowed. The *Text* which they have urg'd to countenance this Opinion, hath been ſo frequently and fully cleared, that I think they can ſcarcely *abuſe* it to do them any further ſervice. *Thou art Peter, and on this Rock will I build my Church.* The caſe in ſhort was this; *Peter* a little before had made a *good confeſſion*, *Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the Living God*; *Chriſt* requites him by ſaying alſo to him, *Thou art Peter*; *q. d.* Thou art fitly called ſo, (*Peter* ſignifying a Rock, or *Stone*:) And haſt made good this Character by the *ſtedfaſtneſs* of thy Faith in me; then he adds, (not upon *thee* Peter, but) *upon this Rock will I build my Church*; *i. e.* upon this *Truth* which thou haſt confeſs't, or upon *my ſelf*, who am the matter and ſubſtance of it. Certainly, if *Peter* were to have had ſo great a *preheminence* beyond his Fellows, our Lord would not have plac't them *all* equally upon *twelve Thrones*, which utterly ſhuts out the pretence of exalting *Peters Chair* above the reſt. Beſides this, it deſerves to be remark't, that *none* of the Apoſtles (excepting the *Son of Perdition*, whoſe Charge was *taken by another*) *fell ſo foulely*, as *Peter* did; none *deny'd* and *abjur'd* their Maſter, but only he; as if God had reſolv'd to *diſcourage* the deſign of advancing him to any ſuch *Headſhip* over the Church, as the *Papiſts* would put upon him. He that *ſeem'd* 1. Matth. 16. 18. v. 16. John 1. 42. Matth. 19. 28.

Galat. 2. 9. *to be a Pillar*, was but left a while to himself, and he seem'd like *a reed shaken with the wind.*

2. Secondly, As to the *Pope*, the present visible *Head* of the *Roman Church*, his *Succession* to *Peter* in that Seat can never be clearly made out, and if it could, their case would not be much the better. We know very well, what abominable *Monsters* have possest both the place and the power, as even *their own Historians* have reported; as *Rome* is *spiritually called* Revel. 11. 8. *Sodom and Egypt*, so that Chair hath been *literally* filled with *unclean Sodomites*, and *Egyptian Sorcerers*; as their *Antichristian* Church is often described by the *Beast*, so the Heads of it have been more properly *Brutes* than *Men*; and while they have lifted up themselves *above all that is called God*, they have carried the notorious *mark and Image of the Devil*. The greatest *Deceivers* that ever appeared in the World, have been their Men of *Infallibility*, and such as have *departed furthest* from the Truth, have been their *Unerring* Guides. If this Rock of *theirs*, be as *our* Rock, let all that have the least part of an *Eye to see*, 1 Cor. 10. 4. determine; our Rock is *Christ*, (as the Rock of the *Jewish Believers* was) a Rock which no *Darts* of Temptation could *pierce*, and a Rock which *stands fast for ever*; the *Holy one of God*, and the *King Eternal.*

2. Secondly, *Unwritten Traditions* are *their* Rock, and the *Word of God* is *ours*. What *comparison* is there between these two? How many things have our Enemies deliver'd to the World as *Oracles*, which have been grosly false and *fabulous!* And how doubtful and uncertain must the best be, if we consider how lyable they were to be alter'd and deprav'd, either through the *rudeness* or *treachery* of those

those into whose hands they came! How hardly can we credit a *report* in our own times, after it hath been propagated from one to another, unless we trace it to the *Spring*! How many times are we deluded and mistaken in things which are but *of Yesterday*! How much more when Traditions are pretended of so great *Antiquity*! But indeed, 'tis a great temptation to Men to *leave the Word of God*, and seek out other supports, when they find that the Word is *against* them; if the Bible could be *suborn'd* as a positive Witness in their Cause, they would not fly to these *Unscriptural Sanctuaries*; they are forc't (as it were) to *say something of this kind*, that they may not be *speechless*. How much safer and happier are we therefore, who are *built upon the foundation of the Apostles* Ephes. 2. 20. *and Prophets*! We are able to say with *David*, that we *hope in the Word*; and we believe as the *Sacred Canon* directs us to believe, but no otherwise. Our *Faith* does not lean upon the *Words of Men*, but the *Inspired Writings* of those that *came from God*; which the Apostle *Peter* commends as *more sure than a voice* 2 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *from Heaven*.

Thirdly, *Images*, *Reliques*, and the *Consecrated Elements* are *their Rock*. (I joyn all these together, as having some *affinity* one to another, and being of equal *signification*, *i. e.* of none at all.) What confidence do the *Romanists* place in *Images*, as if those lifeless representations (*like the shadow of Peter passing* Acts 5. 15. *by*) could perform extraordinary matters! A piece of folly and stupidity, which cannot be better described, than in the words of the Psalmist, *They that* Psal. 115. 8. *make them, are like unto them, and so is every one that trusteth in them*. What strange expectations have they from the supposed Vertue of their multiplyed *Reliques*, as if every little *fragment* that once belong'd

2 King 13.21. to a *Saint*, would (like the *dead bones of Elisha*) revive others with a Touch! Tho, if we were to contend with them about these, (as the *Archangel* did with the *Devil* about the *Body of Moses*) we should find that the *far greater part* of them must needs be *Counterfeits*. What Mighty things will they fancy to be done by the presence of the *Host*, which they carry often in *Procession*, as if they did intend to match Exod. 32. 1. the *Idolatrous Israelites* exactly, by *having Gods which should go before them*! How unworthy are all these things to be compared with *our Rock*, with God (I mean) whose *similitude none ever saw*, or with Christ, the *express* and substantial *Image of his* Fathers *Person*! How unfit are they to be *laid in the ballance* with a *Living God*, and a *Glorified* Redeemer!

4. Fourthly, *Indulgences* and *Pardons* are another of *their Rocks*. Indeed, these are some of the chief *Excrements* of the *Roman Church*, wherein (like *Samson's hair*) they think that their *great strength lyes*. For after they have debaucht themselves never so much, and *stain'd* their hands never so deeply (perhaps) in *blood*, they fancy that they may (with *Pilate*) *wash* them by this means, and appear *fair* and unspotted in God's sight; As if there could be *no condemnation* to those that have received the *Priests Absolution*, or as if they might confidently *alter* those triumphant Rom. 8. 33. words of the *Apostle*, and say, *Who shall lay any thing to our charge? It is* the Vicar of *Christ that justifies us*. Who knows not, that they trust to *the Key of David* hanging at the Pope's Girdle, which shall *open Heaven* to them, and *shut Hell* against them, notwithstanding all the Wickedness of their foregoing Lives? This is the *Rock*, which all the profligate Members of that Communion *swim* to, and which they are fatally *Shipwracks by*; multitudes *purchase a standing* upon this

this dangerous and deceitful *bottom*, not only with the sacrifice of their *Estates*, but the loss of their *Souls* too. We *Protestants* on the contrary, though we are far from imagining that *we have no sin*, yet we place all our hopes in *Divine Forgiveness*; believing that 'tis to no purpose for *Men* to *remit our sins*, so long as *God retains them*. Our *free* pardon *without* Isa. 55. 1. *Mony and without Price*, is more *effectual* than that which they *buy so dear*.

Fifthly, The *Intercessions* of *Angels* and *Saints* 5. are another *Rock* which *they build* much upon. They perswade themselves, that these *Heavenly Courtiers* have their *King's Ear* in every case, and that they are as *attentive* in *listning* to us, as *successful* in *pleading* with God; more especially, the *Virgin Mary*, (their *Queen of Heaven*) invested by them with greater Authority than all the rest, so that she need not to use the humble Style of *intreating*, but may take upon her to *command her Son*. But surely, if we could suppose that the *Blessed Virgin* in that perfect and sinless state above, could be guilty of such *presumption*, Our *Exalted* Saviour might with more reason say to her there, as he did at the *Marriage in Cana* (when she John 2. 4. only *intimated* to him, that *they had no Wine*, without so much as making any *explicit request* for him to provide it) *Woman, what have I to do with thee?* Is not she, and all the other *Agents* employ'd by *that Church*, perfectly discarded by *that Text*, which mentioning the relief that we have, *if any man sin*, tells us only 1 John 2. 1. of *an Advocate* (which shews, that there is but *one*) *with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*? Such an *Advocate for our Persons*, as that he is also the *Propitiation for our sins*, v. 2. which they that *are of Cephas* (I mean, the *Roman Faction*) cannot say concerning *him*, or any Creature whatsoever. Now, who can

be

Rom. 8. 34. he so fit to *intercede for us*, as he that *dyed for us*? Who so worthy to *plead our Cause*, as he that *paid our Debt*? Who best deserves to be *always spoken to* John 11. 42. by us, but he, whom we know that God *always hears*? Who so likely to prevail in *mediating* with God, as he that from Eternity *rejoyc'd before him*? What comparison is there between Jesus Christ, and the *highest* Angels, or the *best* of Saints? Between an *Omniscient High Priest*, and those that *know not any thing* Eccles. 9. 5. of our Affairs below?

6. Sixthly, The *Merit of good Works* is a principal *Rock* which our Enemies have *chosen to themselves*. This (like the *rich Mans Wealth*) is *their strong Tower, and the high Wall to their own conceit*. They look upon God as their *Debtor*, and go to him (as he in the Matth. 18. 28. *parable* did to his *fellow Servant*) crying, *Pay me what thou owest*; scorning to *receive* that as a *Gift*, which they think they may *demand* as *Wages*. I need not insist here, (tho' 'tis most undeniably true) that the *Works* which they are so confident of *meriting* by, are not really *good*, because a sound and lively *Faith* is not the *root* of them; I say, I need not make use of this Argument against them here, for tho' we do *believe with our hearts*, and perform all *Acts of Obedi-* Ephes. 2. 8. *ence* from that *principle*, yet we are *saved by Grace*, and that's the surest *foundation* to raise our hopes upon. *Mercy* will be found the best and strongest plea *in the day of Judgment*; and those wretched *drowning* Sinners, that *catch hold* of any other *twigs*, shall sink and perish Everlastingly. Who can say, that his *own Righteousness* is equal with the *Righteousness of God*, Philip. 3. 9. which the true *Protestant* desires (like *Paul*) to be *found in*? Who can compare his own *filthy Rags* (which are no better than *Tinder*, if the *Fire* of Revel. 7. 14. God's Wrath should *fall upon* them) to *Robes washed white*

white in the Blood of the Lamb? And therefore, as *Balaam*, after he had ſpent a great deal of time and pains, with hopes of *curſing Iſrael*, was conſtrain'd at laſt to *bleſs* them; ſo *Bellarmine* (a great *Cardinal*, and celebrated *Author* in the *Church of Rome*) when he had uſed abundance of ſubtilty in *defending* the Doctrine of *Merit*, he does in a manner, *revoke* all, by concluding, [" Propter incertitudinem propriæ " Juſtitiæ, & periculum Inanis gloriæ, tutiſſimum eſt " fiduciam totam in ſolâ Dei miſericordiâ & benig- " nitate reponere.] *Becauſe of the uncertainty of a " perſonal Righteouſneſs, and the danger of vain glory, " it is the ſecureſt courſe to put our whole truſt in the " Mercy and goodneſs of God alone.* This leads me to

The *Third* thing, which is to ſhew, whence it comes to paſs, that *even our Enemies judge* our Rock to be better than our own. Briefly, there may be theſe three *grounds* and reaſons of it. III.

Firſt, There is a *mighty Evidence* in ſome *Truths*, which *cannot be reſiſted* by Men of the moſt *corrupt minds*. The *Light* of Nature is not ſo far *put out* in the vileſt Perſons, but that they do *ſee* ſome of the Differences between *good and evil*. Indeed the *deep Myſteries* of the Goſpel are ſuch as *cannot be known by Natural Men*, but there are other Truths ſo manifeſt and notorious, that they *cannot* eaſily *be ignorant* of them; 'tis almoſt impoſſible to *hide* them from their *underſtandings*, and Conviction *breaks in* againſt their Wills. It may be in their power to *deny* many things, which 'tis not in their power to *diſbelieve*; their Tongues perhaps may ſpeak in *oppoſition* to that, which their Judgments do *neceſſarily aſſent* to; as the Devil may be the Author of *Atheiſti-* I. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

cal

cal Suggeſtions to others, tho' he cannot doubt of the being of God *himſelf*. I queſtion not, but that our Enemies *would* judge *their* Rock to be better than *ours*, if they could bring their *thoughts*, as well as their *Words*, ſo much *under their own Command*; therefore we muſt conclude, that they think *thus*, becauſe they are not able to avoid it by thinking *otherwiſe*.

2. Secondly, *Signal* Rebukes of *Providence* do many times make this Truth more plain to our Enemies, of the *Incomparable Excellency* of our Rock. Then it becomes as *legible* to them, as the *Handwriting* upon the Wall to *Belſhazzar*; and they diſcern it as clearly, as *Pharaohs Magicians* did *the finger of God*, when they could no longer imitate the *miraculous Works of Moſes* by their *Enchantments*. If *Dagon* cannot ſtand before the *Ark of the Lord*, even in the *houſe of Dagon*, but like a poor helpleſs God be driven of from his *own dunghil*, it muſt needs in ſome meaſure *open the eyes* of thoſe that are moſt *in love with darkneſs*. When God *fruſtrates* the moſt probable *tokens of the Lyers*, and *turns* the wiſeſt *counſells into fooliſhneſs*: When he *brings his wheel* on a ſudden over their necks, that are trampling upon others, and makes Men's own *contrivances* and *preparations* moſt pernicious and fatal to themſelves: When Enemyes that were wont to be attended with the ſtrangeſt *ſucceſſes*, fall afterwards under as ſurprizing *diſappointments*, and the *ſtream of proſperity* which hath *carried all* before them, *runs* as ſtrong againſt them: This will certainly make them *reflect* (though Satan bend all his cunning to *ſtifle* ſuch Reflexions) upon the *weakneſs* of the Rock which they truſt in. There are ſome *appearances* of God in all his works: he does nothing, but what *declares the glory* of the Agent: nevertheleſs there

Exod. 8. 19.

1 Sam. 5. 2.

there are *particular diſpenſations* alſo towards the Enemies of the Church, wherein *the Lord is* eminently *known by the Judgments which he executeth.* Pſal. 9. 16.

Thirdly, The *Terrours of God* are a Demonſtration of this truth ſometimes to Adverſaries, even *in the midſt of their proſperity.* I do not think that *Babylon*, even while ſhe *ſits as a Queen*, can fortifie her *Children* againſt inward *Convulſions*, or that they who ſeem above the fears of any *viſible diſturbance*, are therefore alwayes *perfectly at eaſe*; the *Worm* of Conſcience may be *biting*, while their *Gourd* is *flouriſhing*; the *Spirits* of *Iſraels troublers* may be *troubled*, and when their *voice* to others is *as the roaring of a Lyon.* God may *ſpeak* more dreadfully *in his Wrath* to them. Pſal. 2. 5. He who can *touch the Mountains*, ſo as to make them *ſmoak*, can make the *Pillars* of the Antichriſtian Kingdom *tremble*, and their Hearts *aſtoniſhed at his reproof.* This way of God's dealing with the *minds* of Men, is worſe than the heavieſt ſtrokes of Providence falling upon their *outward concerns*; 'tis many times indeed induſtriouſly *cover'd* and diſſembled by thoſe that *feel* it (who know how to *laugh*, when they have more cauſe to *howl*) but it cannot be totally *eſcap't*, nor quietly *endur'd.* It will *unſettle* Men *from their lees*, and beget a *ſenſe* of God's excellent greatneſs, and (it may be) will extort ſuch an *acknowledgment* alſo, as it did from lofty *Nebuchadnezzar* at the beginning of his *Reign*, that *our God is the God of Gods.* Dan. 2. 47. If God do *work* upon the Souls of Enemies, as he is able to do, (without *letting looſe his* viſible *hand* againſt them) he can bring *every knee* to *bow*, and *every tongue* to *confeſs.* 3.

Q. If any should now ask, Why *Our Enemies* cleave to *their Rock* still, seeing they must be *secretly convinc't*, that *our Rock* is better, the Answer is easie.

A. 1. First, *Common Convictions* (such as *they* at any time lye under) are very weak and *ineffectual*, as to the altering of Mens *state* and *customary practice*. The meer speculative *knowledge* of Divine Truths hath but small influence in producing a Reformation, when they are not *deeply imprinted* by the Spirit of God, and backt with an Holy *experience*. *No man* Luk. 5. 39. (says our Saviour) *having drunk old Wine, desireth new*; but the *new* may still satisfie those that never had any more than a *Notion* of the goodness of the 1 Pet. 2. 2. 3. *Old*. Those Spiritual *tasts* and relishes which Believers have, incline them to a *love of the Word*, and keep them from following after *Fables*.

2. Secondly, The *Pride* of their Hearts will not suffer them to *destroy*, what they have been *building up* for so many hundreds of Years. They must *pull down the whole frame* of their Church, if they entertain any thoughts of a *new foundation*. They must *abandon* all that they have been fiercely *contending* for so long, if they espouse *our Rock*, and quit *their own*. It will not be enough to give up a few *less material points*, but their *main principles* must be renounc't also. And this is too *hard a saying* for those who have *puff't up* themselves with a vain Opinion, that they *cannot err*.

3. Thirdly, The powerful Temptation of *Worldly Interest* will hinder *such a change*. For, they must then strip themselves of all that *pomp* and *grandeur*, and lay aside all those cunning Artifices of *robbing* the People to increase their *Churches Treasure*, which recommends that Religion so much to the *Lusts of Men*.

Men. They know not how to ſacrifice the *pleaſure* of *Domination*, or to leave that *profitable Trade* of the *Merchandiſe of Souls*, which they muſt do, if they make choice of *our God*, and be reconcil'd to *our Religion*. *Great Poſſeſſions* and *Honours* do very often, even in leſſer caſes, prejudice Men againſt the Doctrine of the *Goſpel*.

Fourthly, Their *Conſciences* are Judicially *ſeared*; as the *Apoſtle Paul* foretold of theſe *Grand Apoſtates in the latter times*. They are under *ſtrong deluſions* (as the ſame Perſon ſpeaks of them elſewhere) by the *Righteous Judgment* of God, who, becauſe they have left the *truth*, hath left them to themſelves. Perhaps God may have a *Remnant of People*, that are yet *in Babylon*, whom he will *call out* from thence before the time of her *final deſtruction*; but as to the Generality, and *main body* of that Church (and more eſpecially, the *Learned Men* in it) they ſeem to be deliver'd over to a *reprobate mind*; and the *hardneſs of their hearts* is become both their *ſin* and their *puniſhment* too. So hopeleſs an Attempt is *that* of *Healing* thoſe whom God hath determined to *cut off*. 4. 1 Tim. 4. 2. 2 Theſs. 2. 11.

IV. In the *laſt place*, I am to *Apply* all this, with *ſome relation to the Day*. Several things may be Inferr'd from the foregoing Diſcourſe, which are very *proper* to be conſider'd by us *now*.

3. Firſt, If our *Enemies themſelves* cannot but *judge*, that *their Rock is not as our Rock*, then we have a *Witneſs for us* in their own boſoms, that our *Separation* from them was *juſt* and *neceſſary*. They cannot blame or cenſure the *Reformed Churches* that have forſaken their Communion, without ſome inward *check* upon their Spirits. When they call us *Here-*

ticks, and give us all the other opprobrious Names they can invent, 'tis ſcarcely poſſible that they ſhould forbear to think, (as *Saul* ſaid to *David*) that *we are more righteous than they*; and therefore their *contradicting* and *blaſpheming* (like thoſe *malicious Jews*) is the *greater ſin*. As *Pilate*, even when he *condemned* Chriſt, did declare him innocent and *faultleſs*, ſo while our *Adverſaries* revile us, and thunder out their *Excommunications* againſt us, there is ſtill *ſomething within* them, which *gives ſentence* for us. How little then is the *evil* which they *ſpeak*, to be regarded, when their *own Hearts* tell them, that they *lye* in ſpeaking it!

Acts 13. 45.

2. Secondly, This teaches us, that we may very well *pray in Faith* for their *Confuſion*: (The *Scripture* encouraging us to expect this, much more than their *Converſion.*) Their *Rock* is but a *Quick-ſand* which will *ſwallow* them up, or as a *Millſtone* to *drown* them, Inſtead of a *foundation* to *bear* them. What therefore ſhould make us afraid of uſing the *Pſalmiſt's* words, with the ſame *hope* that was in him of their accompliſhment! *Confounded be all they that ſerve graven Images, that boaſt themſelves of Idols.* What ſhould make us doubt, but that the *doom* denounc't by the *Prophet* will be executed on *their Gods! They are vanity, the work of Errours; in the time of their viſitation they ſhall periſh.* During the *time* of God's forbearance, and of the *patience of Jeſus Chriſt*, we ſhould be praying, that this *time of viſitation* may be haſten'd, as Men who are aſſur'd, that their *fall ſhall be great*, and that after it they ſhall *never riſe more.* Let all that *make Interceſſion againſt Babylon* (as *Elias* did againſt *Iſrael*) believe this firmly, that the *Golden Cup* which is now in her hand

Pſal. 97. 7.

Jerem. 51. 18.

Rom. 11. 2.

full

full of abominable filthineſs, ſhall *run over* at laſt with *Divine fury*.

Thirdly, This ſhews how *fooliſhly* and *unjuſtly* the *ſucceſſes* of God's Enemyes are at any time attributed to *their own Rock*. This hath been their practice often; as the *Philiſtins offered a great Sacrifice to Dagon their God*, when they had gotten *Sampſon* in their hands. So the *Adherents of Antichriſt* have *praiſed their Gods of Gold and Silver, of Wood and Stone*, and made their acknowledgment to their ſeveral *Imaginary Saints*, when they have *proſper'd* in any of their Deſigns. But how much are they *miſtaken* and deluded in all this! How do they *offend* (like the *Caldæans* of old) in *imputing this power to their God*, which they receive from *ours!* We read of the *Holy City* being *given to the* (Popiſh), *Gentiles to tread under foot* for a limited time; now who can *give* it to them, beſides the *Lord of all*, who does it, when he pleaſes, in order to wiſe and *holy ends?* An *Idol*, which is *nothing in the World*, (*i. e.* hath no *efficacy* or vertue) is worthy only to *inhabit the praiſes* of ſuch *as the horſe and mule, which have no underſtanding*. 3. Judg. 16. 23, 24. Habac. 1. 11. Revel. 11. 2. 1 Corinth. 8. 4.

Fourthly, If our Rock be *ſo much better* than theirs, how carefully ſhould we *walk before him*, that he may *continue to be Ours!* That we may not be *diſpoſſeſt* of our Intereſt in him, nor *broken off* from our Relation to him. The ſame God who hath *turned our Captivity* from us, is able to *bring it back* again; and he that hath *ſet our feet in a large place*, can yet *ſhut us up into the hands of our Enemies*. 'Tis eaſie with God to *undo* all that he hath *done*, if we *abuſe his Mercy* by groundleſs preſumption, and wilful impenitency. The *greateſt Judgments* do ſometimes 4.

Jude 5. times come after the *greatest deliverances. The Lord having saved the People out of the Land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.* 'Tis very
Josh. 23. 15. possible, that God *may bring all evil things* upon the same Persons, upon whom *all good things have come.* Our *Mountain* does not *stand so strong*, but that our sins may breed an *Earthquake* to unsettle and *remove* it. No humane *Policy* or *Power* can protect us, if our God should *depart* from us. We read, that *the Army*
2 Chro. 24. 24. *of the Syrians came with a small Company of Men against the Israelites, and the Lord deliver'd a very great Host into their hand, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their Fathers.* And if these *Nations* should so lose *their God* after such amazing Instances of his Presence with them, how dismal would their condition be! If God should be provok't to *turn away his*
Prov. 24. 18. *wrath* from our Adversaries, and pour it out *afresh* upon us, *to whom should we flee for help?* If our *Rock should sell us*, who of our *Confederate Neighbours* is able to *Redeem us?*

5. Fifthly, Let our Rock have *the Glory due unto his Name* for the TWO *Great Salvations* which *This Day* brings to our remembrance; I mean, That which was wrought for our Fore-fathers so *many years* ago, and That which was wrought for us but *One year* since. God hath honoured this Day with a *Double Mercy*, let us honour God by yielding to him a *Double Sacrifice of Praise*; *binding it*, as with
Psal. 118. 27. a twisted *Cord to the Horns of the Altar.* Let us raise a *Pillar* of thankfulness with such a lasting *Inscription*, as neither *Time*, nor any *other Hands* may ever be able to *deface.* Both *our Fore fathers* and *we* were deliver'd from the *same Enemies*, tho' not strictly from the very *same methods of Conspiracy*; formerly they aim'd

aim'd at the destruction of the *Lawgivers* by *one blow*, but lately at the subversion of the *Laws* themselves by more *gradual measures*; in the *Powder Treason* they had contriv'd to *blow up* the *Persons* of our Governours, and for some years past they have been *laying the Train* to *blow up our Constitution*. Blessed be that God, who so seasonably prevented both the *one*, and the *other*. *This Day* might have been a *Day of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy*, (as *Hezekiah* once complain'd); and so it would have been indeed, if when the *Children were come to the birth*, there had not been *strength to bring forth*; I mean if God had *frown'd upon* the Glorious Undertaking of our *Present Sovereign*, which *this day* begun to take effect. *Let not Darkness* therefore, *nor the Shadow* of Oblivion ever *stain this day*; *let no cloud dwell upon it*; *let no mournful voice be heard therein*. Who is there, that bears *Good will to our Sion*, that will not reckon it the best in our *English Calendar*, and most worthy, above all others, to be *joyned to the Days of the Year*? In short, Let *Our Mouths be filled with God's Praise, and with his Honour* all this Day long, and let our *Conversations practically* express it all our Life long; That our Holy Gratitude for the Mercies which we *have*, may fit us for those which we *want*; that our *Sun* may neither *go backward*, nor *stand still*, but make haste (in God's *due time*) to *finish its remaining course*.

2 Kings 19. 3.

THE END.